Mr. Trump was enraged that Mr. Pence was refusing to try to overturn the election. In a series of meetings, the president had pressed relentlessly, alternately cajoling and browbeating him. Finally, just before Mr. Pence headed to the Capitol to oversee the electoral vote count last Wednesday, Mr. Trump called the vice president's residence to push one last time.

"You can either go down in history as a patriot," Mr. Trump told him, according to two people briefed on the conversation, "or you can go down in history as a pussy."

GOV
Exhibit
802L